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ABSTRACT

The Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) Exit Level Writing Test is based on eight behavioral objectives that fall under five skill areas. Satisfactory performance on this test is required for high school graduation in Texas. This document, intended for teachers and test developers, presents general testing instructions and specifications for each of the objectives. Test items and answer choices are described, and sample items are included for the multiple choice test. The five skill areas are: (1) mechanics--demonstrating knowledge of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; (2) demonstrating knowledge of correct English usage; (3) recognizing correct and complete sentences; (4) organizing a written communication; and (5) proofreading. (GDC)

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Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

ED266161

English Language Arts: Writing Objectives and Measurement Specifications 1986-1990 Exit Level

TM 860 105

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Texas Education Agency
Division of Educational Assessment
August 1985

FOREWORD

As a result of the passage of House Bill 72 by the Second Called Session of the Sixty-Eighth Texas Legislature, numerous changes in the student basic skills assessment program will take place beginning with the 1985-1986 school year.

One of the most significant changes occurs with the exit level test. Satisfactory performance on the Exit Level examination is required for students to receive a high school diploma.

The learning objectives contained in this document will be measured on the Exit Level Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) test. These objectives are congruent with the *State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum*, which outlines the rules and procedures for implementing Section 21.101 of the Texas Education Code. The TEAMS objectives and measurement specifications are provided for use by teachers and other educators responsible for student instruction and for test development specialists involved with the preparation of the TEAMS tests. Beginning with the 1985-1986 school year, the Exit Level TEAMS test will be based on the objectives in this publication.

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TEXAS EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF MINIMUM SKILLS

EXIT LEVEL WRITING

List of Objectives

Skill Area: Mechanics

Objective 1. Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

Objective 2. Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

Objective 3. Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

Skill Area: English Usage

Objective 4. Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

Skill Area: Sentence Formation

Objective 5. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

Objective 6. Recognize the sentence that best combines two related sentences.

Skill Area: Organization

Objective 7. Demonstrate the ability to organize a written communication.

Skill Area: Proofreading

Objective 8. Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

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EXIT LEVEL WRITING

General Specifications

I. Test Items

A. Sentences used in the test will be developed using only those words contained in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 10. Proper nouns and words explained in the text are excluded from this requirement.

B. Sentences will be of varying lengths and shall not exceed 20 words in length.

C. Simple, compound, and complex sentences will be used.

D. Sentences will have content that is appropriate to the interests and experiences of eleventh and twelfth grade students.

E. Sentences shall represent various ethnic groups of populations in the state of Texas. The three main groups are black, Hispanic, and white.

F. The sentences and items shall be free of stereotyping by age, sex, ethnicity, and geographical location.

II. Answer Choices

A. For each item, there shall be four responses with only one correct response.

B. Except where noted otherwise, all words in the items including the answer choices, will be taken from the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 10. Proper nouns and words explained in the text are excluded from this requirement.

C. "None of the above" may be used as an answer choice.

III. Test Package Format

A. The test shall be printed in black ink on white paper.

B. Graphic displays, their corresponding items, and response choices shall appear on the same or facing pages.

C. Type size shall be appropriate for eleventh and twelfth grade students.

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OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Skill Area: Mechanics

Skill Description

Students will be presented with a brief written communication such as they might write in school, at home, or in their community. Students will be asked whether, in specified parts of the communication, there is an error in mechanics, that is, (1) capitalization, (2) punctuation, or (3) spelling. The students will be required to select the error in mechanics or to indicate that no error is present.

Objective 1. Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

Objective 2. Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

Objective 3. Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

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SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 1

Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed written communication followed by a question, "In which part of this (type of communication), if any, is there an error in capitalization?"

2. All parts of the communication will be identified by bracketed numbers, e.g., [3]. The parts to be identified include each sentence as well as the salutation, closing, and writer's name in a business or friendly letter.

3. The communication will contain no more than five sentences.

4. All capitalization errors will be drawn from Content Supplement A, Capitalization Rules Eligible for Testing found on pages 27 and 28 in this publication and will consist of:

   a. failing to capitalize a word that should be capitalized according to the rules in Content Supplement A, or

   b. capitalizing a word that should not be capitalized according to the rules in Content Supplement A.

5. Each communication will exemplify the correct use of at least three different capitalization rules in Content Supplement A.

6. In any given set of items a variety of different types of errors in capitalization will be exemplified.

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, e.g., Part [2]. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

2. The first three answer choices will represent parts of the communication likely to contain the particular type of error under consideration.

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3. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. that part of the communication in which initial capitalization though required is not present;

   b. that part of the communication in which initial capitalization though not permissible is present; or

   c. the "None of the above" answer choice when there are no capitalization errors in the communication.

4. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. <u>proper capitalization</u>, that is, identifying a part of the communication as containing an error in capitalization when, in fact, none is present; or

   b. <u>unidentified error</u>, that is, indicating that no capitalization error is present when, in fact, an error in capitalization is contained in the communication.

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Example of Test Questions

[1] Dear Tom,

[2] I really want to thank you for the wonderful gift from california. [3] I never expected to own a Los Angeles Dodger baseball cap! [4] Did you buy it at a ball game? [5] Thanks so much.

[6] Sincerely,

[7] Jim

In which part of this letter, if any, is there an error in capitalization?

A. Part [2] (correct answer)

B. Part [1] (proper capitalization)

C. Part [6] (proper capitalization)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 2

Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed written communication followed by a question, "In which part of this (type of communication), if any, is there an error in punctuation?"

2. All parts of the communication will be identified by bracketed numbers, e.g., [3]. The parts to be identified include each sentence as well as the salutation, closing, and writer's name in a business or friendly letter.

3. The communication will contain no more than five sentences.

4. All punctuation errors will be drawn from Content Supplement B, Punctuation Errors Eligible for Testing found on pages 29 and 30 in this publication and will consist of:

   a. omitting a necessary punctuation mark,

   b. inserting an extraneous punctuation mark, or

   c. using an incorrect punctuation mark.

5. In any given set of items a variety of different types of errors in punctuation will be exemplified.

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, e.g., Part [2]. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

2. The first three answer choices will represent parts of the communication likely to contain the particular type of error under consideration.

3. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. that part of the communication in which an omitted, extraneous, or incorrect punctuation mark is present; or

   b. the "None of the above" answer choice when there is no punctuation in the communication.

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4. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. proper punctuation, that is, identifying a part of the communication as containing an error in punctuation when, in fact, none is present; or

   b. unidentified error, that is, indicating that no punctuation error is present when, in fact, an error in punctuation is contained in the communication.

Example of Test Questions

> [1] The school principal, Mr. Jones was given a special gift in today's assembly. [2] The senior class presented him with a set of golf books. [3] The seniors were grateful for the way that Mr. Jones had worked with them for four years.

In which part of this paragraph, if any, is there an error in punctuation?

A. Part [1] (correct answer)

B. Part [2] (proper punctuation)

C. Part [3] (proper punctuation)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 3

Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

Description of Test Questions

A test item will be initiated by the following question: "Which, if any, of the following words is misspelled?"

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be words drawn from the TEA spelling list for Grades 9-12. One of the three words may be misspelled in a way that the word is typically misspelled. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. a misspelled word; or

   b. the "None of the above" answer choice when there is no misspelled word.

3. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. proper spelling, that is, identifying a word as misspelled when, in fact, its spelling is correct; or

   b. unidentified error, that is, indicating that no spelling error is present when, in fact, one of the three words is misspelled.

Example of Test Questions

Which, if any, of the following three words is mispelled?

A. imediately (correct answer)

B. appreciation (proper spelling)

C. commercial (proper spelling)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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Skill Area: English Usage

Skill Description

Students will be presented with a brief written communication they might write in school, at home, or in their community. Students will be asked whether, in specified parts of the communication, there is an error in English usage. The students will be required to select the error in English usage or to indicate that no error is present.

Objective 4. Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

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SKILL AREA: ENGLISH USAGE

Objective 4

Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this (description of communication, e.g., letter or paragraph), if any, is there an error in English usage?"

2. All parts of the communication will be identified by bracketed numbers, e.g., [3]. The parts to be identified include each sentence as well as the salutation, closing, and writer's name in a business or friendly letter.

3. The communication will contain no more than five sentences.

4. All usage errors will be drawn from Content Supplement C, English Usage Rules Eligible for Testing found on pages 31 and 32 in this publication and will contain either:

   a. one error in English usage, or

   b. no errors in English usage.

5. The categories of errors permissible for inclusion in test items are errors in:

   a. noun usage,

   b. verb usage,

   c. pronoun usage,

   d. adjective/adverb usage, or

   e. word choice.

6. Test items will represent a variety of usage rules taken from those that are found in Content Supplement C.

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, e.g., Part [2]. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

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2. The first three answer choices will represent parts of the communication likely to contain errors in English usage.

3. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. that part of the communication in which one of the content supplement's English usage rules has been violated; or

   b. the "None of the above" answer choice when there is no usage error in the communication.

4. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. proper usage, that is, identifying a part of the communication as containing an error in English usage when, in fact, none is present; or

   b. unidentified error, that is, indicating that no usage error is present when, in fact, an error in English usage is contained in the communication.

Example of Test Questions

> [1] I went to the grocery store yesterday to buy some food for supper. [2] To my surprise I found that my former guitar teacher was working as a checker. [3] He were a wonderful guitar player and a fine teacher.

In which part of this paragraph, if any, is there an error in English usage?

A. Part [3] (correct answer)

B. Part [1] (proper usage)

C. Part [2] (proper usage)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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Skill Area: Sentence Formation

Skill Description

Students will be presented with a brief written communication such as they might write in school, at home, or in their community. The students will be requested to determine (1) whether, in specified parts of the communication, an error is present in sentence formation or (2) the best way of coordinating or subordinating the information given in two related sentences.

Objective 5. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

Objective 6. Recognize the sentence that best combines two related sentences.

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SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

Objective 5

Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will require students to identify a sentence formation error.

2. A test item will consist of a boxed written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this (description of communication, e.g., letter or paragraph), if any, is there an error in sentence formation?"

3. All parts of the communication will be identified by bracketed numbers, e.g., [3]. The parts to be identified include each sentence as well as the salutation, closing, and writer's name in a business or friendly letter.

4. The body of the communication will contain no more than five sentences (including run-on sentences and sentence fragments).

5. Each communication will contain:

   a. one run-on sentence,

   b. one sentence fragment, or

   c. no sentence formation errors.

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers e.g., Part [2]. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. that part of the communication which contains a run-on sentence or sentence fragment, or

   b. the "None of the above" answer choice when there is no error in sentence formation.

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3. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. proper formation, that is, identifying a part of the communication as containing a sentence formation error when, in fact, none is present; or

   b. unidentified error, that is, indicating that no sentence formation error is present when, in fact, a run-on sentence or sentence fragment is contained in the communication.

4. Each set of answer choices will include answer choices from at least two of the categories described in number 3 above.

Example of Test Questions

[1] Dear Meg,

[2] It has now been six weeks since you promised you would return the books that you borrowed. [3] Six weeks, a long time by anyone's standards. [4] When can I expect to receive the books? [5] After all, a loan isn't a gift!

[6] With love,

[7] Jill

In which part of this letter, if any, is there an error in sentence formation?

A. Part [3] (correct answer)

B. Part [2] (proper formation)

C. Part [4] (proper formation)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

Objective 6

Recognize the sentence that best combines two related sentences.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will require students to select a sentence which best combines two related sentences.

2. A test item will consist of two sentences in a box followed by the question, "Which of the following sentences best combines the information given in the two sentences above?"

3. Two related sentences will be presented. The nature of the relationship between the sentences will be sufficiently clear so that it will be possible to determine whether (1) the two sentences are coordinate in their importance or (2) one of the two sentences is subordinate to the other.

4. The nature of the coordinate or subordinate relationship between the two sentences will be sufficiently clear so that an appropriate conjunction (e.g., "and," "but," "for," "because," "although," "thus," etc.) can be selected to combine the two sentences.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Four combinations of the two sentences will be provided, all of which contain most of the information contained in the two boxed sentences.

2. The correct answer will be that sentence which best combines the two boxed sentences so that (1) their coordinate or subordinate status is represented and (2) the nature of that coordination or subordination is accurately reflected in the conjunction selected. In addition, no essential information in the two boxed sentences will be omitted in the correct answer choice.

3. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. inappropriate subordination, that is, subordination relationship when coordinate status is implied by the sentences' content;

   b. inappropriate coordination, that is, a coordinate relationship when subordinate status is implied by the sentences' content;

   c. improper conjunction, that is, the choice of a conjunction is inconsistent with the content-implied nature of the relationship between the two sentences; or

d. omitted information, that is, the omission of information presented in the two boxed sentences.

4. Each set of answer choices will include answer choices from at least two of the categories described in number 3 above.

Example of Test Questions

> John arrived at the factory promptly at seven in the morning. The reason was that he wanted to apply for a job.

Which of the following sentences best combines the information given in the two sentences above?

A. John arrived at the factory promptly at seven in the morning because he wanted to apply for a job. (correct answer)

B. John arrived at the factory because he liked to be prompt. (omitted information)

C. John arrived at the factory promptly at seven in the morning, but he wanted to apply for a job. (inappropriate coordination)

D. John arrived at the factory promptly at seven in the morning although he wanted to apply for a job. (improper conjunction)

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Skill Area: Organization

Skill Description

Students will be presented with all or part of a written communication and a statement of the communication's purpose, topic, audience, and form. A single sentence will be deleted from the communication. The students will be required to select, from four choices, the sentence that best completes the communication by beginning, continuing, or ending it.

Objective 7. Demonstrate the ability to organize a written communication.

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SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION

Objective 7

Demonstrate the ability to organize a written communication.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed written one- or two- paragraph communication followed by a question. A single sentence will be deleted from the communication. The deletion will be represented by two (partial or total) blank lines.

2. A communication will be followed by one of three types of questions, depending upon the sentence which has been deleted from the communication, as follows:

   a. For communications from which the focusing sentence has been deleted, a question will take the form: "Which one of the following sentences can best be used to begin the (type of communication)?"

   b. For communications from which an internal sentence has been deleted, a question will take the form: "Which one of the following sentences can best be used to continue the (type of communication)?"

   c. For a communication from which the concluding sentence has been deleted, a question will take the form: "Which one of the following sentences can best be used to end the (type of communication)?"

3. Each communication will be preceded by a brief, parenthesized assignment sentence which describes the purpose, topic, audience, and form of the communication.

4. The communication will contain no more than two paragraphs, with six sentences maximum in each (including the blank sentence).

5. All communications (before a sentence has been deleted) will contain a focusing sentence. This sentence will (or would) be the first sentence in the communication. The focusing sentence will identify the topic (what the communication is about) and establish the means by which the writer will develop that topic.

6. A communication's topic will be developed in one of two ways:

   a. A topic may be developed through a narrative mode, that is, narration of a sequence of events. A communication employing this method of development will relate events in a clear chronological order, from those most distant in time to those most recent, or vice versa. Sequencing words (e.g., first, next, then, etc.) will be used to clarify the order of events.

b. A topic may be developed through a descriptive mode, that is, presentation of details or support. A communication employing this method of development will contain a series of details or explanatory statements which develop the topic established by the focusing sentence. Although such a communication may contain sequential elements, those elements will not constitute the communication's organizational pattern.

7. All communications (before a sentence has been deleted) will contain a concluding sentence. This sentence will (or would) be the last sentence in the communication. The concluding sentence completes or summarizes the communication in a succinct manner. Whenever possible, summary words or phrases (e.g., finally, at last, in conclusion, etc.) will be used to make the concluding nature of the sentence clear.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will be a single sentence related to the content of the communication.

2. For test items requiring students to select a sentence to begin the communication:

   a. The correct answer will be a focusing sentence, that is, a sentence which both identified a topic and establishes a direction for the development of that topic.

   b. Incorrect answer choices will be:

      (1) an out-of-sequence sentence, that is, a sentence which belongs in the communication but does not fit into the communication's organizational pattern at the point indicated by the deleted sentence;

      (2) an irrelevant sentence, that is, a sentence which is unrelated to the content of the communication;

      (3) a redundant sentence, that is, a rephrasing of one of the communication's other sentences; or

      (4) a concluding sentence, that is, a sentence which completes or summarizes a communication often making use of concluding and/or summarizing words or phrases.

3. For test items requiring students to select a sentence to continue the communication:

   a. The correct answer will be a continuing sentence, that is, a sentence which logically continues the communication with reference to the type of development established by the focusing sentence and the sentences which precede and follow it.

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b. Incorrect answer choices will be:

(1) a <u>focusing sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which both identifies a topic and establishes a direction for the development of that topic;

(2) an <u>out-of-sequence sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which belongs in the communication but does not fit into the communication's organizational pattern at the point indicated by the deleted sentence;

(3) an <u>irrelevant sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which is unrelated to the content of the communication;

(4) a <u>redundant sentence</u>, that is, a rephrasing of one of the communication's other sentences; or

(5) a <u>concluding sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which completes or summarizes a communication often making use of concluding and/or summarizing words or phrases.

4. For test items requiring students to select a sentence to <u>end</u> the communication:

a. The correct answer will be a <u>concluding sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which completes or summarizes a communication often making use of concluding and/or summarizing words or phrases.

b. Incorrect answer choices will be:

(1) a <u>focusing sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which both identifies the topic and establishes a direction for the development of that topic;

(2) an <u>out-of-sequence sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which belongs in the communication but does not fit into the communication's organizational pattern at the point indicated by the deleted sentence;

(3) an <u>irrelevant sentence</u>, that is, a sentence which is unrelated to the content of the communication; or

(4) a <u>redundant sentence</u>, that is, a rephrasing of one of the communication's other sentences.

5. Each set of answer choices will include incorrect answer choices from at least two of the categories described in numbers 2, 3, and 4 above.

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Example of Test Questions

(A student wrote this paragraph for her teacher to answer the teacher's question, "What did you do during your vacation?")

_____

_____.

First, we baked a batch of oatmeal cookies. After my mother and I had eaten some of the cookies, we decided to bake an upside-down cake. When the cake was done, we baked a chicken for dinner. Finally, we cleaned up the kitchen. With all that baking, we had made a real mess!

Which of the following sentences can best be used to <u>begin</u> the paragraph?

A. My mother and I spent the first day of my vacation in our kitchen. (correct answer)

B. In review, we really baked more than I had thought possible. (concluding)

C. The chicken was delicious. (out-of-sequence)

D. At the beginning we baked many oatmeal cookies. (redundant)

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Skill Area: Proofreading

Skill Description

Students will be presented with a brief written communication such as they might write in school, at home, or in the community. Students will be asked whether, in specified parts of the communication, there is an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage. The students will be required to select the error or to indicate that no error is present.

Objective 8. Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

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SKILL AREA: PROOFREADING

Objective 8

Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

Description of Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed written communiction followed by the question, "In which part of the (type of communication), if any, is there an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage?"

2. All parts of the communication will be identified by bracketed numbers , e.g., [3] . The parts to be identified include each sentence as well as the salutation, closing, and writer's name in a business or friendly letter.

3. The communication will contain no more than five sentences.

4. The communication will contain either (1) one error in mechanics (i.e., capitalization, punctuation, spelling) or English usage or (2) no error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage.

5. All capitalization errors will be drawn from Content Supplement A, Capitalization Rules Eligible for Testing found on pages 27 and 28 in this publication and will consist of:

   a. failing to capitalize a word that should be capitalized according to the rules in Content Supplement A, or

   b. capitalizing a word that should not be capitalized according to the rules in Content Supplement A.

6. All punctuation errors will be drawn from Content Supplement B, Punctuation Errors Eligible for Testing found on pages 29 and 30 in this publication and will consist of:

   a. omitting a necessary punctuation mark,

   b. inserting an extraneous punctuation mark, or

   c. using an incorrect punctuation mark.

7. The following spelling errors are eligible for inclusion:

   a. All errors will consist of misspelling of exit level words on the TEA spelling list for Grades 1-12. Misspellings will represent typical ways in which words are incorrectly spelled.

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b. Each communication will contain at least three words drawn from the TEA spelling list, Grades 9-12.

8. All English usage errors will represent violations of the rules in Content Supplement C, English Usage Rules Eligible for Testing found on pages 31 and 32 in this publication.

9. In any given set of items a variety of different types of errors in mechanics will be exemplified.

Description of Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, e.g., Part [2]. The fourth answer choice will be "None of the above."

2. The first three answer choices will represent part of the communication likely to contain errors in mechanics and English usage.

3. Correct answer choices will be:

   a. that part of the communication in which initial capitalization though required is not present;

   b. that part of the communication in which initial capitalization though not permissible is present;

   c. that part of the communication in which an omitted, extraneous, or incorrect punctuation mark is present;

   d. that part of the communication in which a spelling error is present;

   e. that part of the communication in which one of the content supplement's English usage rules has been violated; or

   f. the "None of the above" answer choice when there is no error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage.

4. Incorrect answer choices will be:

   a. part of the communication in which there is no error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage; or

   b. unidentified error, that is, indicating that no usage error is present when, in fact, an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage is contained in the communication.

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Example of Test Questions

[1] I arrived almost two hours early at the airport for my first flight on an airplane. [2] Four students from my school had been selected to visit the zoo in San Diego California. [3] After looking forward to the trip for so long, I certainly didn't want to miss my flight.

In which part of this pargraph, if any, is there an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage?

A. Part [2] (correct answer)

B. Part [1] (no error)

C. Part [3] (no error)

D. None of the above (unidentified error)

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CONTENT SUPPLEMENT A

CAPITALIZATION RULES ELIGIBLE FOR TESTING

1. Initial capitals are required for:

   a. the first word of a sentence (e.g., The king is dead.),

   b. names of days of the week (e.g., Monday, Saturday),

   c. names of months of the year (e.g., March, September),

   d. the pronoun I (e.g., I went to the store.),

   e. names, including initials, of individuals (e.g., John R. Doe),

   f. titles which precede individuals' names (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Doctor, Senator),

   g. all the words in the names of holidays, except prepositions and articles (e.g., the Fourth of July),

   h. the first word and all nouns in the salutation of a letter (e.g., Dear Sir or Madam),

   i. the first word in the complimentary close of a letter (e.g., Sincerely yours,),

   j. family relationship names, when they precede a name (e.g., Uncle Bill) or are used in place of a person's name, especially in direct address (e.g., "Did you call me, Father?"),

   k. all the words in the names of specific geographical locations, except prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (e.g., the Avenue of the Americas, Rocky Mountains, Florida),

   l. all the words in names of specific organizations and agencies, except prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (e.g., Boy Scouts of America, National Aeronautics and Space Administration),

   m. names of languages (e.g., Spanish, German),

   n. names of definite sections of a country or the world (e.g., The South is a beautiful part of our country.),

   o. names of nationalities, races, and tribes (e.g., Swedish),

   p. names of religions (e.g., Episcopalian, Baptist) and deities (e.g., Jehovah),

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q. adjectives formed from names of geographical locations, languages, races, nationalities, and religions (e.g., He was a famous Italian painter in the 17th century.), and

r. the first word and all the other words in titles of books, articles, works of art, etc., except short prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (e.g., The Wind in the Willows.).

2. Initial capitals are never used for:

a. common nouns (e.g., My Car broke down yesterday.),

b. adjectives not based on proper nouns (e.g., My Blue Car needs to be washed.),

c. words other than the first word in the complimentary close of a letter (e.g., Sincerely Yours),

d. prepositions, conjunctions, or articles in the names of holidays, specific geographical locations, specific organizations, and title of books, articles, etc. (e.g., Fourth Of July),

e. family relationships when used alone or preceded by a possessive pronoun (e.g., I was talking to my Brother.),

f. compass directions that designate direction rather than a section of the country (e.g., We live North of New York.),

g. names of the seasons (e.g., This is a lovely Fall.), and

h. names of school subjects, except for proper nouns or adjectives, or course titles followed by a number (e.g., The grades in History and Biology were low this year.).

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CONTENT SUPPLEMENT B

PUNCTUATION RULES ELIGIBLE FOR TESTING

1. Periods are required:

   a. at the end of all declarative sentences, including indirect questions, and

   b. after abbreviations.

2. Question Marks are required at the end of a direct question.

3. Exclamation Marks are required at the end of declarative or imperative sentences which express extemely strong feelings.

4. Commas are required:

   a. in a series of three or more words or phrases*,

   b. between two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction,

   c. to separate coordinate adjectives that modify the same noun,

   d. to set off nonessential clauses and nonessential participial phrases,

   e. to set off expressions, such as appositives, that interrupt the sentence,

   f. after the salutation in a friendly letter,

   g. after the complimentary close in a letter,

   h. between the independent parts of a date (except when you are given only the month, in which case no punctuation is needed),

   i. between the independent parts of an address or geographical location, and

   j. before a direct quotation.

* Students will not be tested on the use of the comma before "and" or "or" in a series.

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5. Semicolons are required between independent clauses not joined by coordinating conjunctions.

6. Apostrophes are required:

   a. to form possessive nouns, and

   b. to form contractions.

7. Colons are required:

   a. to separate hours and minutes in time, and

   b. after the salutation in a business letter.

8. Hyphens are required to divide a word at the end of a line.

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CONTENT SUPPLEMENT C

ENGLISH USAGE RULES ELIGIBLE FOR TESTING

1. AGREEMENT

   a. Subject-Verb agreement. Subjects and predicates of clauses or sentences must agree in person and number. Subjects to be tested may include (a) simple subjects, (b) compound subjects joined by " and," (c) nouns separated from the predicate by an intervening phrase, and (d) indefinite pronouns.

   b. Pronoun-Antecedent agreement. Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number.

2. VERB USAGE

   Verb tense must be formed correctly. (Example of error: "He done it.")

3. PRONOUN USAGE

   a. Nominative case. The nominative case of a pronoun must be used in all simple or compound subjects of sentences or clauses.

   b. Objective case. The objective case of a pronoun must be used in all simple or compound objects of verbs or prepositions.

   c. Possessive case. The possessive case of pronouns must be formed correctly (for example, "her coat" rather than "her's coat").

4. ADJECTIVE/ADVERB USAGE

   a. Negation. Only one negative word (including "scarcely" and "hardly") may be used to negate the same idea in a sentence.

   b. Adjective and adverb form. The comparative and superlative forms of all adjectives and adverbs must be formed correctly.

   c. Adjective and adverb use. An adjective must be used to modify a noun or pronoun. An adverb must be used to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

5. WORD CHOICE

a. Homonym selection. The proper homonym must be selected for a given context. (Example of error: "Their is no moon to be seen.")

b. Word appropriateness. The appropriate word must be selected for use in a sentence. (Example of error: "He should of come to the party.")

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.